

# BULLETIN

ENGLISH SECTION

March-April, 1993

No 328

IGUD YOTZEI SIN IN ISRAEL (ASSOCIATION OF FORMER RESIDENTS OF CHINA)

## EDITORIAL

By BORIS MIRKIN

In spite of the "Intifada" and the terror outrages directed by the arch-enemies of Israel in Tunis and Teheran, the traditional Purim carnivals danced through the streets of the Israeli cities. Although the weather was somewhat winterish and the rains swept the land, it was obvious that the spring is in the air and we could begin counting the days before the coming of Pessah.

Now is the the pre-holiday cleaning-and-scrubbing season. The writer could not avoid contributing his bit in the family effort: brushing the dust off the many-a-tome family library. This, however, has its own perils and dangers: how, for instance, can one take a book off the shelf and not peep into it, even though one had read and re-read it scores of times.

Judge for yourself: how can one take a volume of Shalom Aleikhem off a shelf and not run through his story "Shalakhmones", where two young servant girls were sent by two wealthy merchants with holiday gift parcels for their no less wealthy competitors. The girls were tired, and on their way decided to take a rest on a trunk of a fallen tree. They sampled the contents of the parcel, and, needless to say, when they reached the destination, the parcel was half empty. The enraged recipients took it as an insult and brought the case before the court. The judge, however, refused to deal with the "homentash case" and referred them to the local Rabbi reb Yozefl. Said the Rabbi: "Pessah is approaching. Such a holiday! Our forefathers left Egypt. They crossed the sea, they wandered through the desert for forty years. They received the Tora

at the foot of Mount Sinai where it is written so beautifully: 'love thy neighbour!' And you quarrel over such petty silly things! You should have better remembered about 'Moes Hittim' "

From the days of my childhood, there in far away China, more than anything else I still remember this humane custom of "Moes Hittim", the gathering of contributions for the poor so that they, too, may have a dignified holiday, so that everybody would have wine and meat and fish and sweetmeats on their "seder" table: "Kol hata'amim".

During the days of the pre-holiday scrubbing there, in Harbin, the Jewish homes were usually visited by Mr. Rafael Elevich, who collected contributions for the Moes Hittim". He was a most charming person this Rafael Elevich, who strictly kept the Jewish tradition of "Matan be-setter" — not one contributor knew the names of the recipients and no recipient knew who the contributor was.

Having made Aliya, Mr. Elevich was elected to be the honorary Gabbai in the memorial synagogue of the Jewish Communities in China, situated in the Ramat-Haiyal quarter in Tel-Aviv (which was once known as **Shikun Shanghai** populated by 28 families, former residents of the Far East).

But let us go back to my childhood reminiscence. I still remember the "Seder". My father, z"l, read the "Agadah" with a Bielorrussian recitative. My grandfather was a "Mitnaged" but my father, who came to Harbin during the First World War, joined a Khassidish minyan of the **Moshav Zkeinim**, of which he became a Gabbai, led the services and read out the Torah portions.

I never learned to read "Agadah" with the traditional recitative. Once, about 15 years ago, doing my army

reserve duty, I had to stay in the camp on the "Seder" night. My co-milumniks asked me to lead the "Seder" service. I tried to do it the way my father did, but soon was forced to limit myself to the functions of the "chairman of a meeting", assigning this or that soldier in turn to read out a portion of the narrative. For myself I left the story of the Four Sons.

In my youth I had read and re-read Jabotinsky's feuilleton "The Four Sons". One of them is clever (**Khakham**), another is wicked (**Rasha**), the third is a simpleton (**Tam**), and the fourth "does not even know how to ask".

I always paid most attention to the second, the wicked son, the one who does not take part in the destiny of his people. "Yours," he says, not "Ours". He does not care that in Eretz Israel a home had been erected for the Jewish people. He does not want to realize that if the Jewish State existed during the Second World War, the Great Catastrophe would have been avoided.

Back in their places are the volumes of Shalom Aleikhem, Jabotinsky and others, among them the volumes of "Bulletin" where the chronicle of our small organization, **Igud Yotzei Sin**, is recorded. A chronicle of steady work for mutual help and support, with the help of our friends here and abroad. Work that lasted for four decades.

As years go by, there are less of us. But this year, as ever before, our needy friends from the Far East received their allowances from the Social Assistance Fund, so that they, too, could meet **Hag ha-Pesah**, the Holiday of Spring and Freedom, in joy and dignity.

**HAG SAMEAH!**



# Appeal to our Landsmen in Los Angeles

Sometimes, the news you get causes you a lot of pain and intense feeling of anxiety and concern.

Such were the news we got from our Los Angeles friends, former residents of China, our landsmen, informing us of their intention to close down and disperse their association in Los Angeles and Southern California.

After the dissolution of our Sydney Association, there remained in the whole world only four centers altogether, namely, in Israel, New York, San Francisco and Los Angeles.

And now we are faced with the possibility to lose our Los Angeles Association. Mrs. Sarri Ferber, the LA President of the Association was honored by our organization, Igud Yotzei Sin, for her invaluable work during so many years, who together with all our friends in LA, worked so hard in order to help our needy landsmen in Israel.

On the map of the worldwide dispersion of our landsmen, our Association in LA always held one of the outstanding places, not only because of the remarkable qualities of our devoted friends, friends of the Igud Yotzei Sin, not only because of the fact that ALL the donations in LA went for the benefit of the needy landsmen in Israel, but also because it was in LA that a very considerable donation was made that brought into existence Beit Ponve — the fact that changed the whole status of the Igud and gave it a different and a very promising perspective and future.

The Ponve and Fein families are the organic part of our "Chinese" LA.

I do understand the reason that could lead to the dissolution of the Association in LA — the demise of the two outstanding personalities de-

voted to our Association i.e. Iliusha Rozanski and Bob Ferber (of blessed memories), the illness of some of the active members of the community, diminishing participation of members at the meetings and gatherings, all these facts influenced the leaders of the Association and probably caused them to take the decision to dissolve the organization.

But our friends in LA probably did forget to take into consideration that for us in Israel they provide not only the steady financial support that we need so desperately now more than ever, but also that for us the Association in LA serves to be the address that with the dissolution of the Association will cease to exist.

And this last consideration is most important of all, not only for the Igud itself, but especially for the 140 persons, our needy brothers and sisters in Israel.

All of us here and in LA likewise, are bearing the burden of responsibility for these deprived by their unduly hard fate: unfortunately, their

numbers are increasing and ours, are steadily diminishing. And therefore you have to go on and on with your blessed work, in memory of those who are not with us any more, who left us recently and in the name of those who still depend on our help, for they have no other address except that of the Igud Yotzei Sin in Israel and Association in New York, San Francisco and Los Angeles. The American Far Eastern Society of Southern California (LA) has to reconsider its decision and continue their blessed work. The Association of Far Easterners must continue to exist. This is our fervent request, our APPEAL to you, our dear friends in Los Angeles, who have never let us down in times of hardship and strass.

Go on with your work, all hardship notwithstanding. It is indispensable, first of all for those whose existence and future we have to secure, for all the needy who depend on the Igud, here and in LA, for we have to remain one, indivisible entity.

T. Kaufman

## SAN FRANCISCO

## A Successful Lunch

On the 14th February a lunch was held for the benefit of the elderly members of IYS living in Israel. The members of the Committee of the Far Eastern Society in San Francisco did their best — and their best was good enough.

After the official part was over, the guests were invited by the President, I. Finkelstein to take their seats at the tables decorated with flowers and Valentine hearts (Valentine Day is the gifts day in USA).

A. Michlin conducted his orchestra

during the lunch. He also sang a number of Russian songs which were enthusiastically received by the public. Impromptu speeches were delivered to the sound of applause.

I. Finkelstein greeted the guests and read out the list of names of the contributors. The lottery was successful as usual and the lucky winners of valuable prizes did not hide their joy.

The lunch passed in the most cordial and friendly atmosphere, and the participants left the hall rather unwillingly.

Knowing how hard our President, I. Finkelstein and the chairman of Ladies Auxiliary, Ms. Sarah Ossin, work, I believe they are worth our most hearty thanks for the organization of this luncheon and to wish all the organizers a lot of pep and health for the future.

M. V.

(From Russian)

## A GENEROUS DONATION

A generous donation of US\$ 5,000. — towards the Igud Yotzei Sin Social Aid Fund was made by Mr. and Mrs. W. Rivkin during his recent visit to Israel.

Unfortunately, this donation was not recorded in our previous issue of the Bulletin.

The Editorial Committee wishes to extend its sincere apologies to Mr. and Mrs. Rivkin for this unfortunate omission.

# Purim in Netanya

"When Purim comes, people make merry," goes a popular saying. Or: "On Purim one should drink until he does not distinguish Haman from Mordechai."

This year our Netanya branch had undertaken the difficult task of organizing there the main get-together-event of the former "Chinese" now in Israel.

Netanya is one of the major points on our landsmanshaft may in this country. Our first club was created here. There, on 6, Disengof, we had our conferences, our parties, our cultural undertakings.

When Beit Ponve, our world centre, opened in Tel-Aviv, the first generation of our activists left the stage and the younger members of our organization stopped visiting the club in Netanya. In addition, the owners of the premises asked us to vacate it.

In 1984, as a result of Alex Feldman's initiative, the Netanya Club opened its doors again, this time in the Histadrut Club, "Beit Remez". During the last 8 years many of us took part in various events organized by the IYS members in Netanya: in the celebrations of the Day of Independence, in "Chinese Chow get-togethers" in the Live Bulletin, in the "Chinese" Purim Carnival.

But now the chairman of the Netanya branch, Alex Feldman, and, in his wake, other members of the Netanya Committee, asked to be relieved of their social burden.

The new committee's first task was to organize the Purim Ball. The members of the newly elected committee, Frieda Nissenbaum, Bella Mirkin and Fira Soloveichik gathered the local "Chinese" ladies, who came together with their husbands and were assigned different tasks. It is to be stressed that the members of the old committee also took part in the preparations of the evening.

The ball took place on the eve of Purim, at the "Shalom" Club. The first guests appeared long before 7 p.m., as was advertised. Altogether there were more than 100 people.

It is already a firm tradition that the Netanya and Hedera members are always present at the "Mifgash" club in Bat Galim, Haifa, whenever there is a "Chinese" event. Now our Haifa friends made "a return visit" to Netanya.

Let's begin at the end: the ball was a success. The hostesses prepared delicious refreshments, and around the handsomely decorated tables sat the guests who came from all over Israel.

Frieda Nissenbaum, member of the

Netanya Committee, opened the event by wishing the guests a joyful Purim. She then invited the chairman of the IYS, Teddy Kaufman, to say a few words. Teddy spoke of the significance of the Purim holiday, of the deliverance of the Jews of the Persian Kingdom. He spoke of the wicked Haman and the beautiful Esther. He expressed his wish that the pages of our BULLETIN would not display obituaries, but rather cheerful ads and news. He also appealed to the IYS members to support the organization.

The musical part of the event included both organ and dance music both duly enjoyed by the public. No less were enjoyed the Israeli and the Russian songs by Valia Moshevich, gifted with a beautiful mezzosoprano, Isia Baranovsky moderated.

Also successful was the lottery. It is to be admitted that the bar was practically out of business in spite of the efforts of Grisha Nissenbaum. Our men, it seems, stopped drinking, especially under the strict glances of their wives.

In his closing remarks, T. Kaufman thanked the new committee for the good work they have done and expressed his hope that they will continue in the same vein. We join him and add our own warm greetings and wishes for fruitful work in the future.

B. M.



The Purim evening at the "Shalom" Club in Netanya



# Children's Matinee in „Beit Ponve“

As usual, this year, too, the weather on the day of Purim again played a trick on us: the winter seemed to have returned with all its force: wind, cold, rain, hail. And yet Beit Ponve had opened wide its doors for the youngest of the IYS members: children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren of the former "Chinese".

For many years now, IYS organizes Purim Matinees for its children. The immediate organizers are the Ladies Auxiliary of the Tel-Aviv — Ramat-Gan Committee who carefully plan the programme, the buffet, the gifts — separately for boys and girls, according to their age: from three to eight. The bills are paid by the Tel-Aviv — Ramat-Gan Committee.

This time less children were brought by their grandma's and grandpa's, but the event was no less joyful and noisy than any in the past. The kindergarten teacher, Aliza, well-known to us from the previous matinees, conducts the games, quizzes and plays. The grandma's and grandpa's click the camaras. Some of these photos we used for our photomontage.

As usual it was not easy to make the children put on their coats for the "exit". At the door they were given their gifts. Gifts were also sent to the children who could not come to participate in the Matinee.

And then it was quiet, too quiet in Beit Ponve. The guests were gone.

Gone were also the organizers of the event who do not surrender to fatigue and age and the failing health. They continue their wonderful job and may they be blessed for it. "Ad Mea ve'es-rim".

B. M.

(From Russian)



The joyful Purim Matinee at "Bet Ponve"

# The Saga of Three Sisters

A HISTORY OF SEVEN SCATTERED GENERATIONS

History is created from records, legends, facts, fiction and surmise. It is evolved from inaccuracies, fantasies, correspondence, old letters and photographs with inscriptions. Data often gathered from archives, cemeteries, documents and registers, it needs continuous revision and correction as truth is uncovered and readers contribute to the corrections, which polish and refine this history and make it more credible and a reliable record of the past.

This story begins in the very early 1800. It has many gaps and omissions which need filling, hence this humble scribe begs your indulgence and your donation of some scrap of information which will enable this 'saga' to be corrected and the missing pieces inserted into this treatise. The three sisters who started dynasties, clans, families now scattered all over the world, were descendants of one couple named Mordohovich, who were to the best of our knowledge, resident in Siberia, Russia, in the beginning of 1800, in an area near Lake Baykal and embracing the towns of Irkutsk, Chita and Nerchensk. The three sisters, all born in Siberia, were Leah (born 1847), Julia (born 1848) and Freida (Fannie — born 1852), and subsequently married: Leah to Elias Czerniak (in Siberia 1859?), Julia to Moishe Beckermann, Freida to Aaron Katz (in Siberia 1867). There are unsubstantiated rumours

that there were also siblings of the three sisters in the form of brothers, who, the gossip states, changed their names to Morton when they migrated to United States of America. There is no trace or evidence to reveal the truth or veracity of the conjectures made by some of the descendants who are either now deceased or still living, but of advanced age and, unfortunately, not well informed on the ancestral facts.

In 1893 an "Exodus" from Siberia took place, when the three families with their progeny started to migrate to China — Harbin, Tientsin, Chefoo and Shanghai, to California, U.S.A., to Canada and England. As often is the case, the ties and communications gradually dwindled between families, name changes occurred, for example, Cherniak became Schwartz, Beckermann in some instances became Baker or Becker, the female progeny acquired their husbands' name, and gradually the four family names of Mordohovich, Cherniak, Beckermann and Katz vanished into oblivion for many of the descendants. Thus we arrive at the third generation, who were located mainly in U.S.A. and China. This third generation comprised of a large number (in excess of seven children) of progeny who were the Altshuler, Belson, Dobisoff, Newman, Schwartz, Zimmerman clans, who spread throughout America, China and gradually to



The Baikal Lake

Australia, England, South America and, in some instances, back to Russia, where their traces vanished.

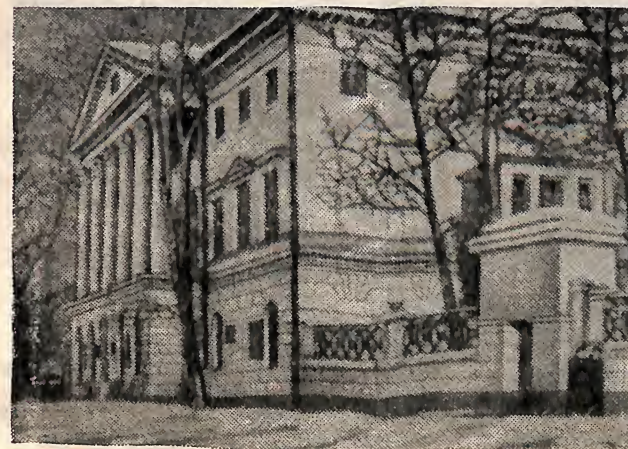
This 1893 migration and settlement in California will be celebrated at a Centenary Convocation or Reunion at Northstar, Tahoe, in Sierra Nevada, by some of the approximately 500+ descendants of the three sisters.

A Genealogical Chart of these descendants covers seven generations, and will shortly reveal the commencement of the eighth generation. The large discrepancy in ages between the various generations is mainly due to the large variance between the ages of the oldest and the youngest sibling in one family, some as much as 20 years apart. In the 1800's, girls were married at 15 years of age (or even younger) and gave birth before their 17th birthday.

In families where a husband was an itinerant worker or businessman, very often there were several years between successive children. Hence in our Genealogical Chart and records we find often that the descendants in the 5th or 6th generation are older than those of the 4th generation!

There are many of the descendants who migrated into USA and Canada who also vanished, changed their names and attempts to trace them, purely to order to complete the records, were aborted. Just to quote an example — a well-known and respect-

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The theatre in Irkutsk



# CHILDHOOD MEMORIES

My earliest childhood memory is the great flood of 1939. Later at school, when we were told of the Biblical flood, we all knew what it was like. We didn't need to be shown films or draw pictures. Every one of us had risen to find the water lapping under our window sills.

My uncle Gdalia Fromberg, his wife, sister-in-law and son, Nona, came to stay with us. My father disappeared, to see that his workers were all right, thus earning their undying loyalty for decades. Pressed by the communists, they refused to create difficulties for him.

The flood, of course, was a very exciting event if you were a little boy. There were volunteer patrols and food distribution from all the different nationalities in Tientsin, including the Betar. Some came in motor boats, others rowed. They brought us much-needed food and other supplies as well as news of friends and relatives. If any of them are reading this, the usual offer of the best dinner money can buy in Eilat if they call hereabouts.

My next memory of a public happening was a benefit performance for the

British War Fund at the British school. The performance was arranged by Mme Voitenko. I was a grenadier guardsman and was rewarded with a pocket address book. Years later, when I met people who had been through the London blitz, I was able to look them in the eye and say I'd played my tiny part.

Then came Pearl Harbour.

The Japanese victory parade was along Victoria Road. Regiment after regiment marched past and as the banners went by, we all had to wave a Japanese flag and yell "Banzai!" Our entire school was lined up on the sidewalk outside the school and everyone had been given a Japanese flag to wave, except me. Unfortunately, I decided to exercise my initiative (Blinik and Kiselev had already been imbuing us with the need to display initiative if we were to be true Betarim). I dashed inside and found a whole set of flags. My father was a great Americanophile, so I picked the Stars and Stripes, rejoined my classmates and as very new regiment went past, I waved my newly-found flag and yelled "Banzai" just as we had been told to do.

I forget which of the teachers no-



The Betar volunteers distribute food

ticed first, paled, seized my flag and hustled me away. For years afterwards I was carefully watched at all events at which flags had to be waved.

Allied, passport holders were interned (including Palestine passport holders), though not all at once. My mother had a good friend called Mrs. Mende and she had to wear an armband to identify her as an allied passport holder. But the majority were rounded up and transported to a civilian internment camp. There was great indignation amongst the Japanese, because the allied civilians sang on their way to be interned.

What was life like during the war?

When I consider how Europe and large parts of Asia suffered, we have no cause to complain. We ate (well). Thanks to the Prejenskys and Ozrelavitches and I think Ifland we had fresh milk and smetana (sour cream) I still dream about to this day. We drank tea, coffee, vodka and home made wines. Life went on. We all knew what was going on in Europe and I could never understand people living in England and America who said they had to ideal! If we, living under Japanese occupation, knew, how come they did not?

At school we had to study Japanese, or, at least, pretend to study Japanese. Mr. Izgur, our headmaster, used to go berserk trying to get us to behave in Japanese classes and even

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December 7th, 1941: Pearl Harbour in flames

## "CHILDREN MEMORIES"

(Continued from page 6)

pass the occasional Japanese language exam. Japanese officers saluted the Jewish flag (probably the only ones in the course of World War II) and were represented on the platform on speech days. We had a day off on the birthday of Emperor Hirohito.

But, of course, there was no doubt where our hearts lay. We listened to the radio avidly, we followed the course of the war with our pre-war atlases. I don't think we knew the name of a single high ranking Japanese, but any T.J.S. schoolkid could name allied generals, as well as which Soviet marshal commanded which front. Hand-written 'chastushki', one of the few forms of protest available, in the form of ditties, were distributed and sung at parties. Jokes and anecdotes at the expense of the axis were saved for parties. At some point the Japanese authorities decreed that ladies were to wear trousers (presumably in case they had to run to an air raid shelter) and nobody was even neutral vis a vis the Japanese after that.

When the German surrender came, there were posters everywhere saying Germany had betrayed Japan, but Japan would fight on.

As far as I know, I was the last (very minor) civilian casualty of the Japanese occupation. Normally, when we passed Japanese checkpoints, we had to bow in the prescribed Japanese manner and extend a greeting. Our Japanese was well up to it, of course. But with the war over, I thought it was unnecessary. So I didn't. A hand reached out from the checkpoint booth and whacked me across the face. The fellow who whacked me wasn't a regular Japanese soldier but some sort of glorified boy scout and a Korean friend of ours wanted us to press charges. Mother didn't want to know, she had always predicted her son meant trouble. The next day the checkpoint was gone.

Most of us who lived through the Japanese occupation of Tientsin are still torn where they are concerned.

When I was in Australia, the Australian Jewish ex-Servicemen passed a strongly-worded anti-Japanese reso-

lution. I wrote a letter to the Sydney Jewish News saying that in the context of Australian history and the brutalities perpetrated by the Japanese against soldiers and civilians, it was right and proper for Australians to do so. But should Jews do it? After all, the Japanese had refused to hand us over the Germans for extermination. The British had, the Japanese wouldn't. All weekend our telephone rang with indignant callers. My poor old mother was sure we'd be lynched or deported or both. Another decade passed and I was invited to dinner by a friend in London. He was entertaining some Australians and would I help entertain his guests. One of his guests recognised my name. Wasn't I the trouble maker who'd written THAT letter. My fellow guest had been on the executive of the Australian Jewish Ex-Servicemen and told me, wryly, that his telephone had rung for days.

Someone asked whether I really had to do it?

Well, yes.

Alex Auswaks

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## THE SAGA OF THREE SISTERS

(Continued from page 5)

ed family of Dobisoff who migrated to Harbin, Manchuria (China), consisted of the parents, three sons and three daughters. The eldest son, Isai Dobisoff, left China about 1912-1914 and went to America and possibly Canada (?). The rumours are that he changed his name to Carson in America and was either a horse breaker or horse trader. All attempts to determine his existence (if he were alive he would be nearing 100 years) or whether he had any descendants; a younger brother Michael and sister Stesia (who married, had a daughter?) migrated back to Russia and also vanished.

Many of the descendants of the three sisters had distinguished careers in Medicine, Commerce, Science and Engineering. To quote a few examples — the late Dr. Minnie Goldberg (dec'd. Sept. 9, 1992), a granddaughter of Freida (nee Mordohovich)

Katz, daughter of Sarah (Katz) Berelson (Zablotsky, was Professor Emeritus at US San Francisco and a recipient of many awards. Similarly, William Berelson, now 86, who with his brother David established a flourishing business and still active as Chairman of a very successful D.B. Berelson Co. who pioneered frozen food in the West of USA and the William E. Berelson Family Research Laboratory in US Berkeley, California, USA. Jacob Berelson (Bill's and David's father) established an import and export business in Chefoo in the early 1800's with his in-laws, the Katz families.

At the other end of the descendants' chart, a great-grandson of Leah (nee Mordohovich) Cherniak, grandson of Sarah (Cherniak) Altshuler, Dr. Geoffrey Altshuler (born in Sydney, Australia) and now Director of Pediatrics at Oklahoma Hospital, U.S.A., is renowned in the medical profession throughout USA, Canada, Europe and Israel, for his research and expertise

in Pediatrics. These are but a few examples of the distinguished descendants, of whom we are all proud to be even distantly related.

There is much more to tell and the pen is still writing the history of the descendants of the Three Sisters, and it behoves all the elders still living to add to the archives for posterity, perhaps we can provide the background for our children and their children to build on, so that in some measure we earn immortality, if only as a grain of sand on the beach and a name in the book of records to establish our existence on this earth.

Is there anyone there among you readers who can provide a key to one of the mysteries in our many Pandora boxes, good or bad we would like to hear about it, for without evil there is no good and no good without evil.

Elias M. Altshuler  
Sydney, N.S.W., Australia  
February, 1993



# Sephardic Community of Shanghai

A SHORT HISTORICAL SKETCH\*

By Rabbi Dr. JOSEF ZEITIN

The increase in the number of Sephardic Jews in Shanghai at the turn of the century required the erection of an organization to meet their needs. Although a Sephardic Synagogue Committee was in existence as early as 1870, a broader communal institution was necessary to find a suitable space for regular divine services and for providing a Jewish education for the boys and girls of the community.

The plan was executed in the year 1900 by erecting the first official oratory (small chapel) situated on Seward Road near Nanking Road bearing the name Sheerith Jisrael and established by Mr. & Mrs. D.E.J. Abraham. Mrs. Abraham was chairman of the Ladies Benevolent Society for many years and did wonderful work for the relief of the poor.

The Synagogue, school and mikvah were lodged in one building. This led to the establishment of the Shanghai Jewish Communal Association in 1910.

After a period of 12 years the community enlarged in all the departments so that a new building had to be acquired in Whangpoo Road where a House of Prayer and mikvah was newly established.

In both buildings the Ashkenazi Communal Association had a service room at its disposal. The school was attended, too, by many pupils of the Ashkenazi Association.

In 1922, further changes occurred.

The Sheerith Jisrael synagogue found a new place in a building on Seward Road corner of Nanking Road whereas the school classes were lodged in a special house situated on Dixwell Road.

In 1917, a beautifully-shaped synagogue building with a modern school wing was built on Seymour Road and was called "Ohel Rachel Synagogue." Funds for the building were donated by Sir Jacob Elias Sassoon, Baronet of Bombay, in memory of his wife Rachel. He had his own daily service in his private residence every day throughout the year. Sir Jacob is the uncle of Sir Victor Sassoon, Bart., also a great contributor to charities in Shanghai. With the end of World War II, after the surrender of Japan, the Jewish servicemen of the American Armed Forces conducted their worship at the Ohel Rachel Synagogue under the direction of Chaplain (Major) Alvin Fine.

Rabbinic functions of the Communal Association were performed by Rabbi Hirsch who served from 1918 till 1925 when he left for Johannesburg, South Africa.

With the expansion of the activities of the Communal Association, it was necessary to erect a new synagogue building. This was done in 1927, by the philanthropists, Mr. and Mrs. S. A.

Hardoon. Included were study rooms and a valuable Jewish library containing literature of various scientific subjects. The name, "Sheerith Jisrael" was altered at that time to "Beth Aharon Synagogue" and it was situated at 50 Museum Road.

Emigration of Jews from Europe reached a high point by Shavuoth, 1939. Through the kindness of Mr. R. D. Abraham and Mr. I. A. Toeg the "Beth Aharon Synagogue" was placed at the disposal of the new immigrants and more than one thousand people attended services on this festival. The new worshippers were deeply touched by the impressive structure, particularly since they had recently witnessed the destruction of European Synagogues and Schools. The sermons on both days including "Mazkir", were delivered by this writer.

Furthermore, the Beth Aharon Synagogue housed the Talmud Thora and Jeshivah-Thora High School under the auspices of the famous rabbinical college "Miser Jeshivah" until the year 1944.

Relief was extended to recent arrivals through the last hard years in Shanghai. Mrs. R. D. Abraham was active in Hongkew, one of the Northern suburbs of Shanghai, and instituted the Maternity Hospital there. Invaluable work was done by the Ladies Benevolent Society.<sup>1</sup> Most noteworthy in the sphere of relief was Mr. Ellis Hayim, who served as Governor of the Country Hospital for over twenty years. He was frequently honored by the British Government for his work in the charitable, economic and commercial field in the Far East. In 1955 Ellis J. Hayim was inducted as a Commander of the Order of the British Empire by Queen Elizabeth "for public services in China."

Besides "Sheerith Jisrael," (later known as Beth Aharon Synagogue), another synagogue was founded in 1900 called "Beth El Synagogue" situated in a building on Szechven Road corner Peking Road so that regular services on weekdays and holidays could be held in the center of town.

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## SEPHARDIC COMMUNITY OF SHANGHAI

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Deep interest in the realm of Jewish education was evinced by Mr. Isaac Samuel Perry, who left a bequest of 150,000 Taels to be utilized for the creation of a school building in Shanghai on condition that the same amount be raised by the people of the Communal Association. The anticipated donations for this noble cause materialized with the assistance of Sir Elly Kadoorie, K.B.E.<sup>2</sup>

The new Shanghai Jewish School was built on Seymour Road in 1932. Reverend M. Brown was appointed to take charge of religious instruction for boys and girls. He also acted as Minister of the Synagogue Ohel Rachel and was active in general cultural activities.

In 1947, the Committee of the Shanghai Jewish School consisted of the following persons: I. W. Citrin, L. Gray, E. F. Toeg, M. J. Isaac, R. Poliak.

In sum, the Communal Association "mothered" the following five institutions in Shanghai:

1. Beth Aharon (formerly Sheerith Jisrael) Synagogue, Museum Road.
2. Ohel Rachel Synagogue, Seymour Road.
3. Ladies Benevolent Society.
4. Shanghai Jewish School, Seymour Road.
5. 'Chevra Kadisha' of the Shanghai Jewish Communal Association.

The War seriously affected the Communal Association and its activities

suffered. Since the outbreak of the Pacific War, it was found necessary to unite the five institutions into one organization under the name "Sephardic Jewish Communal Association". In 1947, the Committee administering the affairs of the Association were: Isaiah Jacob, President; S. Moalem, Hon. Secretary and D. E. Levy, Hon. Treasurer.

In the area of social welfare, nursing service and medical aid, the Communal Association was most active. Both the Ashkenazic and Sephardic Communal Associations carried the responsibility for the support of these services.

Owing to the war, the name 'B'nai Brith Foundation' Shanghai Jewish Hospital was altered in "Shanghai Jewish Hospital." At that time, the Shanghai Ashkenazi Jewish Communal Association took over and opened it in November 1942 on Route Pichon. In 1948, the hospital changed the name back again to "B'nai Brith Foundation" Shanghai Jewish Hospital.<sup>3</sup>

The activities of the Shanghai Jewish Communal Association extended over eight decades\*. Many of its members have since migrated to other lands and other continents. To learn what has become of them would be an interesting addendum to this brief but colorful chapter of Sephardic communal life in the largest city in China.

1. Noted members of the Ladies Benevolent Society at that time were Mesdames D. E. J. Abraham, A. E. Moses, M. J. Isaac, R. E. Toeg, N. F. Nissim and the late Annie Brown.

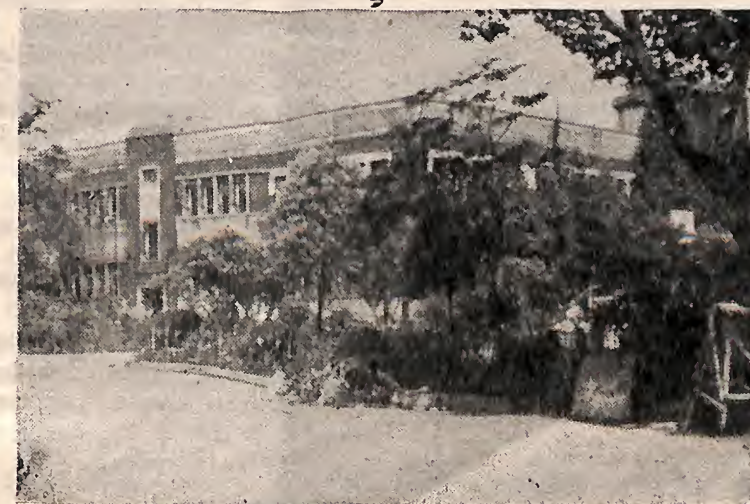


Beth Aharon Synagogue

2. Sir Elly Kadoorie — Knight Commander of the British Empire (1926); Commandeur de la Legion D'Honneur; Grande Medaille d'or de l'Academie Francaise; Medaille de la Reconnaissance de France; First Class Gold Medal of the Chinese National Government; Medaille d'Honneur du Merite Syrien de Premiere Classe Or (1933); Order of the Brilliant Jade (1923/4); President, Union Sephardic, Paris and Vice President, Anglo-Jewish Association, London. He was a known promoter of educational works in many countries. He participated in the opening ceremony of the Hebrew University, Jerusalem in 1926. Together with his sons, Lawrence and Horace, and his brother, Ellis Kadoorie, Kt., he founded schools and hospitals in all parts of the world, particularly in the Near and Far East.

Sir Elly Kadoorie's son, Mr. Horace Kadoorie, together with other patrons, was instrumental in erecting a magnificent school house for pupils in Hongkew. Horace was made officer of the Order of the British Empire by Queen Elizabeth, and was the recipient of Chevalier de la Legion d'Honneur presented by the French government. Lawrence Kadoorie also was

(Continued on page 11)



The Shanghai Jewish School



# The Manchuria Daily News

(民國二十九年九月四日星期三)

HSINKING, Wednesday, September 4, 1940

(Published September 3)

英文滿報

## News From The Past: 1940

### OUR HARBIN LETTER

HARBIN, September 2

Anti-air raid exercises were started here and throughout Pinkiang Province last Saturday from 4 p.m. under an order given by the Governor. During the exercises which will continue for the next few days street traffic will be brought to a standstill after the alarm signals only in the night hours. complete light control must be also observed by the residents during the alarm period.

Residents arriving here from Weishaho Station, along the Harbin-Suifenho Railway, report upon recent clashes of the Japanese and Russian guard troops with a bandit gang numbering about 70. About two weeks ago the gang attacked a small town of Suika, 50 kilometres from the Station, and succeeded in capturing half the town as it was guarded only by a small group of Manchu soldiers. A detachment of Japanese and Russian guards which was dispatched immediately from the adjacent stations to drive the gang away had a hot engagement and inflicted heavy losses to the bandits. The rest of the gang escaped into the thick forests surrounding those places. The pursuit is continuing.

On September 4 and 6 from 10:40 p.m. the local radio-station will broadcast interesting concerts with the participation of local Russian musicians and singers. On the latter night the broadcast will consist of musical, vocal and declamation numbers about the largest Russian river, the Volga.

The economic police yesterday arrest-

### CONTRIBUTED BY THE COURTESY OF Prof. B. BRESLER

ed the owner of a cereal store in the 8th District here. Mr. Li, who last year bought 21 bags of flour at the cost of 7.42 yuan per bag and sold them this year at 14.00 yuan each. He sold 19 bags. He will be heavily fined for the speculation.

Mr. Ishiga, Manager of the Industrial Bank of Manchou, Mutankiang branch, who arrived here on business a few days ago, reported that the development of that city was going on at a rarely rapid pace, along with which the business was also progressing. Particularly, the turnover of his bank has increased by about seven times compared to that two years ago. The population of Mutankiang from 110,000 last year has increased to 170,000 this year and the city now ranks fifth in Manchoukuo by population, after Harbin and Antung. There has already been constructed a good network of canals and waterworks in Mutankiang. There are automatic telephones and a newspaper.

Design of a plan for a temporary bridge over the Machiakow river at

### CONFECTIONARY FACTORY "VICTORIA" MUKDEN

Branches: Dairen, Antung. Large selection of all kinds of CANDIES, CHOCOLATES, CAKES AND BISCUITS, Orders Accepted for all sorts of Parties

WHOLESALE & RETAIL  
HEAD OFFICE: HARBIN

Novotorgovaya Street here in place of the one which collapsed some time ago has been entrusted by the Municipality to their Russian officials of the Road Department, Eng. Fomin and Eng. Riumin. Construction of this bridge will be completed in three or four weeks and it will serve during the whole of next winter and spring, by which time a new ferroconcrete bridge will be ready. The temporary bridge will be a wooden structure.

A group of representatives of the Manchuria Motion Picture Production and Distributing Co., headed by Messrs. Tsugino and Makino, arrived here from Hsinking a few days ago to film the sail-boat competitions which took place here last Sunday. Besides, they filmed a few scenes of the Manchu cemetery here at Tih-lohsi Shrine, of the Old Russian cemetery and other places, and also made a reel of peculiar Russian dances performed in the open air.

There were 415 cases of epidemic diseases in this city including 72 fatal ones, according to statistics by the Municipality for the last month. This number is, however, only half of that in the preceeding month. Typhoid fever cases for the last month numbered 312.

A certain Manchu, Chang, was butchered yesterday for revenge by a thief, Wan Chi-li, whom he had denounced to the police some time ago and who was released from the jail a few days before. The murderer was arrested the same day.

(Continued on page 11)

### (Continued from page 10) JEWISH FORTUNES SEIZED IN SLOVAKIA QUICKLY

Kokutsu

BRATISLAVA, September 4

The Slovak Government authorised the immediate seizure of all Jewish fortunes by a respective decree.

According to this decree all Jews, non Jewish marriage partners of Jews and Jewish associations must register their entire possession in the country and abroad for conscription by the State.

Non-cooperators with this decree will be punished with up to two years' imprisonment.

### JEWISH LAWYERS BANNED FROM FRENCH ASSOCIATION

Kokutsu

PARIS, September

The French Lawyers' Association "Jeuns Barrea Francais" held a meeting at the Palace of Justice in Paris.

The meeting passed a resolution excluding Jewish lawyers and those who were members of Freemason lodges from membership.

Only such Jews whose grandfathers were born in France and Jewish war veterans of 1914-18 will be exempt from such exclusion.

### DAIREN

Among those leaving the Yamato Hotel today were Mr. and Mrs. R.M. Service for Chefoo. Dr. and Mrs. A.J. Kaufman and family by train No. 15 for the north, Mr. Theodore Oksokovsky for the Hoshigaura Yamato, and Mr. and Mrs. H.H. Iben for the north by train No. 17.

### OUR HARBIN LETTER

A few days ago the economic police here punished for speculation two owners of the Kultura stationery store at 12. Mostovaya Street, Pristan, Mr. A. A. Scheuchet, and Mr. D. A. Lemberg, both of whom are Jews. Some time ago two Japanese came to their store and bought something the price of which was too high. When the economic police learned about the case, the books of the store were immediately examined which fact disclosed that the owners derived too high a profit from the articles on sale in their shop. Both owners of the store were immediately called to the economic police and punished.

### BIG INCREASE IN TRAFFIC OVER TRANS-SIBERIAN RAILROAD IS PROBLEM FOR S. M. R. OFFICIALS

Special to the M.D.N.

HARBIN, September 3

Trans-Siberian passenger traffic to Manchouli has been steadily increasing, giving rise to new problems for the South Manchuria Railway Company authorities and Mr. Okamoto, Chief of the Harbin Inquiry Office, and Mr. Yoshida, Chief of the General Affairs Section of the Head Office, have recently been sent to Manchouli to investigate actual conditions there.

After a careful study of passenger welfare there, Mr. Okamoto made the following comments.

Travellers from Europe are increasing day by day. Nearly eighty passengers, most of whom were Jewish, arrived aboard the international train which carried them across Siberia, on the very day we made our inspection.

These Jewish passengers, who gave the appearance of having come from wealthy circles, made their way here by flying to Moscow and then by taking the Trans-Siberian train.

They have been travelling under inconveniences however, because they were not allowed to carry out more than three dollars in cash.

It is regrettable that there is no travellers' cheque system in Manchoukuo that these persons could make use of.

It is necessary to establish such a system and sell the coupons through agencies in Europe. This would prove of inestimable benefit to travellers in taking care of meals, baggage, and hotel charges.

The inconveniences caused by the lack of office space at the Manchouli office were also investigated by Mr. Okamoto and Mr. Woshida and Mr. Yoshida believes that this condition will soon be remedied.

### 64 Arrive Sunday

Special to M.D.N.

MANCHOULI, September 3

A party of sixty-four Jewish refugees arrived here on September 1 via the Trans-Siberian Railroad and proceeded by the South Manchuria Railway to destinations in Shanghai and the United States.

(Contributed by the courtesy of  
Prof. Bresler)

### SEPHARDIC COMMUNITY OF SHANGHAI

(Continued from page 9)

honored by the French Award and served as Justice of the Peace in Hong Kong.

It is noteworthy that Defense Minister, Moshe Dayan, General Itzhak Rabin, Israel's Ambassador in the United States, and Yigael Yadin, noted soldier and scholar, attended the Kadoorie School in Israel.

Other patrons of the Shanghai Jewish School and Jewish educational institutions were: Sir Victor Sassoon, Bart., Sir Ellis and Laura Kadoorie, the Joseph Bros., and R. M. Joseph, Mr. and Mrs. D. E. J. Abraham, E. E. Shammoon, A. J. and Ellis Hayim, Ezra Shammoon, Mr. and Mrs. R. D. Abraham, Simon A. Levy, Mrs. M. J. Isaac, Leone A. Levy, S. Gatton, R. E. D. Sassoon, I. A. Toeg, A. E. Cohen, S. E. Toeg, Mrs. Evelyn David, Mrs. M. I. Hoses, Edward M. Joseph, Edward Shellim, Jacob M. Joseph, Dr. R. A. Belilios, Mr. and Mrs. D. M. David, M. I. Moses, Ezra Moses, Ezra, Miss Moselle Joseph, I. E. Salmon, S. S. Benjamin, I. E. Joseph, Mr. and Mrs. Jemin Joseph.

3. Two beds were reserved at the Country-Hospital for poor patients irrespective of nationality by Mr. and Mrs. M. J. Moses. The same was done by Miss Mary Perry in the General Hospital.

Sir Elly Kadoorie helped maintain the B'nai B'rith Policlinic and Hospital (established in 1934 by Shanghai Lodge No. 1102.)

In the period following the war, Mr. I. Covitt, Presiden of the Lodge, presided over the Hospital together with the relief Committee consisting of S. E. Levy, Rev. Brown, M. Spielman, R. M. Joseph, Ellis Joseph, D. E. J. Abraham, B. R. Abraham and I. A. Toeg.

\* Dr. Joseph Zeitin, native of Mainz, wrote "A history of the Jewish Community of Montabaur (Rhineland) in 1935 (Ph.D., University of Cologne.) He was ordained by the Mirer Yeshiva College.

\* Abstracted by the Editor from an article that appeared in Almanac, 1946/1947, published by the "Shanghai Echo Publishing Co."



# The Earth is Trembling

By ABRAHAM FRADKIN

At the beginnig of September 1979, my eyes caught a PAN AM ad in the Jerusalem Post, offering a package tour to the Far East and the United States. The Far East was my longtime cherished dream, and during my many travels abroad, the United States was not on my itinerary since my last visit there in 1954.

My late wife, Ruth and I decided to sign up for this tour and kill two birds with one stone.

After touring India and a number of other East Asian countries, we arrived in Japan and from there proceeded to Hawaii for a well deserved rest following our hectic tour of the Far East. Our next stop was San Francisco, where we met our many friends, former residents of Shanghai and college mates from our student days of the University of California in Berkeley. Our friends made a great effort to convince us to leave the tour and spend at least a week or two with them in San Francisco. The temptation was great, but we decided to stick to our original itinerary.

I promised my friends to return to San Francisco the following year and spend a few weeks with them. We continued our tour from coast to coast, flew to England and finally home.

I fulfilled my promise and the next year I arrived in San Francisco where I spent unforgettable days with my friends, and, of course, visited my old Alma Mater, in Berkeley. Since then, during my frequent visits to the United States, California has always been on my itinerary, including my nostalgic visits to San Francisco.

In October, 1989, Ruth joined me on my visit to San Francisco where we planned to stay for six days and thereafter fly to San Diego.

On October 17th, the last day of our visit in San Francisco, we were having our afternoon siesta in our room on the sixth and top floor of our hotel, prior to our meeting with some of our

old friends. Suddenly, five minutes after five, we felt that our room began to sway accompanied by minor vibrations. The vibrations intensified with every second. The bedside lamps fell off with a bang from their nightstands, the bureau drawers slid open, and with an ear-splitting roar, the ceiling above our bed cracked and thick plaster and other debris rained on us. Gradually the vibrations began to subside until they stopped completely.

Those were fifteen seconds which seemed like an eternity. A span of time when one is left totally helpless, but fills oneself with optimism and with the hope to survive. Later, we learned that the intensity of the earthquake was measured at 7.1 on the Richter Scale.

The electric current and the phones went dead and the elevators stopped operating. We had no choice but to walk down the six flights of stairs. When we reached the street we witnessed two young men coming out from one of the adjacent houses and volunteering to direct traffic as the traffic lights ceased to function. I then noticed that the local residents and the tourist were swamping the various grocery stores in order to stock up on food and drinks, as they realized that in the absence of electricity everything would be closed including restaurants. I, too, joined the crowds and entered one of the grocery stores. There were large puddles from broken beer and soft drink bottles which had fallen from the shelves during the earthquake. Food cans and other articles were strewn all over the place. I picked my way around, bought some food items and soft drinks to last us that evening and the next morning prior to our flight to San Diego.

Returning to the hotel, we climbed the six flights of stairs and with a sigh of relief entered our room. We had our "dinner" in almost total darkness, accompanied by the continuous clicking sound of my cigarette lighter. Luckily for us, shortly afterwards the phone began to function. With perser-



verence and patience we managed to get through to Tel Aviv. We woke up our Daughter Ronit (six in the morning Israel time) and told her of our dramatic experience. In Israel everyone was still in a deep slumber unaware of the earthquake in San Francisco. We asked the she immediately phone my mother-in-law, Rika Levinson, to spare her unnecessary anxiety should she here the news on the radio.

The next morning in spite of the rumor that the airport was closed, we rushed there to attempt to catch our flight to San Diego. It was "mission impossible", as chaos reigned supreme at the airport. Many flights were cancelled, including ours. The crowds were frantic and the queues were long. Later we learned that some of the pilots and other crew members failed to reach the airport due to the damage to one of the bridges and roads. We barely managed to sign up for one of the flights to San Diego (on the waiting list) and all we had left to do was to sit tight and wait. And all we did — until our patience paid off. Finally we boarded the plane, instead of some other passengers who failed to arrive at the airport in time for take-off.

In San Diego, Izzy Lias, my friend and neighbour from the King Albert Apartments in Shanghai and his wife, Betty, were both excited and relieved when we arrived.

# OPINION: NO APOLOGIES

by  
YA'ACOV S. LIBERMAN

If it could have been possible for me to speak to every Jew in America immediately, after the "Condemn Israel" vote in the United Nations, I would have appealed to them with only three words: DO NOT APOLOGIZE! You may feel uncomfortable that to millions of Somalis and thousands of Moslems in Yugoslavia (of old), Israel is perceived to have added another 400 supposedly starving and shivering humans to the false chagrin and theatrical shock of the "morally pure" United Nations. But don't be.

Who else but the State of Israel would treat murderers and provokers in such a humanitarian way? Have you ever heard of kidnapers and slayers of kidnapped victims to be fed, clothed, placed on buses and given "Hanukkah gelt" before being sent to a friendly — no — brotherly Country, instead of having them all arrested, chained, placed in Gullags and (if found guilty of performing acts of murder) executed after a fair and lawful trial?

Why all this commotion only two days after the burial of a Jewish young man, kidnapped and brutally murdered by the same organization to which the "400" subscribed by oath and through deeds of volance?

Can you imagine a single Jew (not to speak of "400") being expelled from his home in an Arab Country and left starving and freezing by the border of the State of Israel while the Government of the Jewish State would keep them forcibly from entering its territory in order to gain some dubious P.R. advantage in the sensation-hungry western media?

In all likelihood these radical Palestinians are the grandsons of those Palestinians who harkened to the voices of their leaders and "evacuated" their homes in Israel during the 1948 aggression on the new born Jewish State, in order to "come back and wipe the streets of Tel-Aviv with Jewish blood"... As a result they landed in refugee camps where they have lived now for three generations and not one of them was welcomed, absorbed or cared for by any one of the many

Arab States in the Middle East.

All this for the "sacred cause" of Israel's destruction. And the world looks on and... accuses the Jew, which in this case is the State of Israel.

This pattern of total indifference and disregard of "their own" is not confined to the public relations' war against the State of Israel. It goes further and wider. It reaches thousands of starving Muslim children in Somalia as well as thousands of Muslim women raped in Bosnia. And we ask: How much help did these innocent souls receive from their Arab brothers and sisters? Yet, Israel was among the first to offer and send aid and supplies to these long neglected human beings.

Among those accusing Israel for every effort at self-preservation — from winning the 1967 war to expelling murderers from borders under their supervision and control — are several European States who have shown total indifference to the dangerous survival and growth of nazi-type antisemitism in their Countries. Some have even gone as far as to assist various Arab States to achieve their dream of a "Muslim nuclear bomb". They have all refused military sales to Israel. These European "giants" of fair play have yet to raise their hands to condemn Israel's enemies for acts of kidnapping, sky-jacking, tortures and murders.

The Bush Administration has not only abandoned American's traditional friendship with Israel, it has consistently upheld a pro-Arab posture on all major issues related to the Middle East.

Emile Zola would have had a field day if he would be writing his J'Accuse now, in 1992. All injustice done to Dreyfus pales next to the vibrant anti-Israeli (read anti-semitic) bias so shamelessly perpetrated by the combined efforts of European anti-semites and the Bush-Baker Administration.



Yes, my friends, not only do you have nothing to apologize for — you have no one to apologize to. Keep your heads up and your backs straight. And above all else, remember this: Unity is your only defense against prejudice and injustice, false accusations and vulgar condemnations. The State of Israel, like every other existing political personality has a right and an obligation to protect its citizens and to fight for its survival. Evidently, when it comes to Israel, this right and duty becomes a crime in the eyes of the United Nations. So be it.

In the eyes of the just and the unbiased, in the hearts of those who fought and will continue to fight for liberty, freedom, justice and peace — the State of Israel is no criminal. On the contrary, it is an example, a torch bearer, the blazer of a trail. And to us, Jews — Israelis both a solution and a salvation. To preserve Israel is the living goal of every honorable Jew. You have nothing to fear, nothing to be sorry about and — nothing to apologize for!





# U. S. Consul Records About Jewish Refugees

VISITS TO POLISH, RUSSIAN, AND UNITED STATES CONSULATES

By Prof. JONATHAN GOLDSTEIN

Dr. Jonathan Goldstein is Professor of East Asian History in the University System of Georgia/West Georgia College, and Research Associate of Harvard University's John K. Fairbank Center for East Asian Research. Prof. Goldstein organized the Fairbank Center's August 1992 conference "Jewish Diasporas in China: Comparative and Historical Perspective." For assistance with this article, he wishes to thank: Prof. Boris Bresler of the IGUD YOTSEI SIN; Prof. Avraham Altman of the Truman Institute of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem; Prof. Joseph R. Fisman of the University of Oregon (Emeritus); and Melba E. Daniels of West Georgia College.

On November 6, 1992, through the good offices of United States Congressman Newt Gingrich, I was able to meet in Shanghai with representatives from the Polish, Russian, and United States Consulates-General. My objective was to ascertain what records about twentieth century Jewish refugees may still exist and also be accessible to historical researches. I was accompanied on all three visits by Marcia Ristaino, Asian Acquisitions Librarian of the Library of Congress, and Paul Stone, a Lewis and Clark College student writing his senior thesis on Chinese Jewry. Chlara Betta, a doctoral candidate in Sino-Judaica at London's School of Oriental and African Studies, joined the visits to the Russian and American consulates. Lawrence E. Sheftel, a participant in Harvard University's August 1992 conference on Jewish diasporas in China, joined the group in the Polish and American consular visits.

The visit to the Polish consulate was far-and-away the most productive of the three meetings. Consul General Jozef Soltysiewicz showed us a book of approximately 200 pages listing Polish citizens who passed through ei-

ther Shanghai or Nanjing between January 9, 1934 and October 29, 1941. He was uncertain whether this 'sign in' book was kept at the Polish Embassy in Nanjing or in Shanghai. The printed portion of the book was a standard log used in Polish diplomatic missions around the world. The information inscribed in the volume is similar to United States census data. Either the registrant himself or, more probably, a consular official, recorded the following registration date; full name of registrant; his or her profession; religion (ie. "Mojzeszowa" for a Jew); birthdate; birthplace; marital status; address in Poland (non-existent for virtually all Jews); address in the consular region; documents submitted to register (usually a passport; there was no reason why a stateless Pole would sign this register); name and date of birth of wife and children; passport expiration data; and "other notes," ie. "husband is emigrant from Russia."

The long book is in Polish. The Con-

sul General noted that this book has been of interest to at least one prior researcher on Jewish refugees in Shanghai, Mrs. Phyllis Horal of London. He is in the process of inquiring whether the Polish Foreign Ministry will permit photoduplication. If permission is granted, I will try to make a professional microfilm copy that can serve as a master for additional xerox, microfilm or microfiche replication.

Unfortunately, United States Shanghai Consul Ray McGunigle ascertained that there is no microfilming equipment available in Shanghai from consular or academic institutions. I am in the process of determining whether such equipment can be borrowed or rented from one of the foreign businesses in Shanghai. Russian Vice-Consul Igor V. Outkin and Alexander Y. Shamanevsky insisted that there are no relevant documents on Russian Jews in their consulate, even though a Russian consulate has been housed in the same building at 20 Hwang Pu Road since 1915. Mr. Outkin, who previously served as Soviet Vice-Consul in Shanghai, explained the paucity of records as due to a situation in which both previously and today "we do not separate Jews by nationality." Hence, even if records did exist, it would be difficult to distinguish Jews from non-Jews. He added that the Soviet Shang-

(Continued on page 15)



Harvard University's Conference of Jewish Diasporas in China

L. to R.:

Prof. Irene Eber,  
Dr. Jonathan Goldstein,  
Prof. Pan Guang

## U. S. CONSUL RECORDS ABOUT JEWISH REFUGEES

(Continued from page 14)

hai consulate was closed in 1962, 1964, and again for an unspecified period during the Cultural Revolution, at which times "all documents were sent to the Central Archives" in Moscow. He asserted that "movements of people are not confidential at all" and suggested that we apply to the Moscow Central Archives via the Russian Foreign Ministry. He suggested checking the Shanghai Library for the Russian-Language books *Russians in Shanghai*, by Captain Vladimir Jigantoff (Shanghai, ca. 1936), and Natalya Ilyiana's *Vozvrascheniye* (2. vols. Moscow, ca. 1952?), about Harbin. He promised to cable the Russian Foreign Ministry on our behalf requesting additional information on Russian Jews in China.

At this point I asked the Russian Consuls General if, as part of their general request, they might mention files of the monthly *Epoch* (Эпоха) in Russian). This paper was published in the 1940s by the Soviet Citizens Association of Shanghai under the editorship of a Jew named Zagan. The activities of this Association are of historical interest because it along with the Soviet Consulate General in Shanghai was responsible in certain instance for granting the all-important



## FOREIGN TOMBSTONES IN SHANGHAI

I would be glad to look up for your readers the name of relatives buried in Shanghai. I have copied the names on all the foreign tombstones in the Song Qing Ling Memorial Cemetery — the only place where a small number of western graves still remain — and will be glad to check the list. (Be warned however that there are only about two hundred names left, and that all the old cemeteries were vandalized and plowed over during the "Cultural Revolution" of 1966—76).

Please write to:

Miss Tess Johnston  
1469 Huai Hai Lu  
Shanghai 200031, PRC  
(FAX: 86-21-433-4122)

## COUNCIL OF THE JEWISH COMMUNITY SHANGHAI

### REPORT

July 1, 1957 — June 30, 1958

and

### STATEMENTS OF ACCOUNT

January 1 — December 31, 1957

and

January 1 — June 30, 1958

### THE FRONT PAGE OF THE REPORT

clearances necessary for Soviet Jews to leave China. We know something about the activities of this group from a June 23, 1954 letter (in the Jewish Agency archives) from W. J. Citrin in Hong Kong to N. Bar-Giora in Jerusalem. Clearance from the Soviet Citizens Association, according to Mr. Citrin, is connected with "voluntary contributions" which are set beyond the means of the migrants... This particular clearance is more difficult to obtain in the north of China, and particularly in Harbin. It often happens that after the exit permit is granted, it is cancelled one or two days before the intended departure of the migrant. No reason is given for such action, and the person, having liquidated his business and personal affairs, is left to sit and meditate until his final fate is decided some months later... The financial position of the Jews remaining in China is becoming more and more acute.

The files of *Epoch* and Soviet Shanghai Consular documents, may shed light on the financial squeezing of Soviet Jews as they attempted to leave China — an all too common occurrence as Jews tried to leave the U.S.S.R. in the 1970s and 1980s. Hopefully, in the spirit of détente, the post-Gorbachev Russian Foreign Ministry will be forthcoming in releasing documents that clarify the activities of its discredited predecessor regime.

Our final November 6 appointment was with Tess Johnston, the effervescent and indefatigable secretary of the

United States Consulate in Shanghai. During a ten year residence in Shanghai Tess has accumulated three thick folders of material on Shanghai Jewry. She readily shares this information with researchers visiting the United States Consulate. Among the unusual items in her collection are: annual reports of the Council of the Jewish Community of Shanghai up to June 30, 1959, including material on Tianjin and Harbin; and miscellaneous articles from such publications as the United States based *China Connection* and the Hong Kong - based *The South China Morning Post* and *Schofar*. Mrs. Johnston's activity as Judaic history resource person is completely voluntary and over-and-beyond her extensive consular responsibilities. Nevertheless she assists scholars on a time-available basis. She can be contacted c/o American Consulate General, PSC 461 Box 200, FPO AP 96521-002.

In summation, I am looking forward to a positive response from the Poles on the reproductibility of their long book and other Shanghai or Nanjing consular documents with Judaic content. I am hopeful that the Russians, in the spirit of glasnost and détente, will divulge *Epoch* and other Shanghai records which they almost certainly have in their Moscow Central Archives. And I thank the American Consular personnel in Shanghai for facilitating appointments with their Polish and Russian counterparts and for their unstinting support or historical research.



The Hongkew Gate



# My Father Misha Levaco

By BEN LEVACO

My Father was a man who, until his dying day, was very much in love with his wife, my Mother Rachel. He idolized her. Throughout his life he never argued with her and never, never raised his voice. He always called her Rayushenka, an affectionate Russian term for Rachel. Mother could do no wrong; she was in truth my Father's queen.

Michael Levaco was the middle son of three sons of my Grandfather Movshev Levaco of Kainsk, Siberia, who was a prominent industrialist. Father worked in Movshev's enterprises and did not have a financial care in the world. Events soon changed that.

Father's first experience of being without the protection and security of wealth occurred on September 1, 1923, when he was 37 years old. On that day, a disastrous earthquake struck Yokohama, Japan, where we lived. Father was left with only two Japanese Yen in his pocket, the equivalent of less than one American dollar. Our house was in flames as we dashed out to safety when the quake struck and Father did not even have time to grab his jacket in which he had left his wallet. There was no returning for the money or, for anything else for that matter, including Mother's substantial amount of jewelry. Father's business assets were also destroyed, in a warehouse, which was burned to the ground. Unfortunately, they were uninsured, and we were thus left penniless.

Until that day, Father was a jovial, outgoing, happy individual — as a boy, teenager and young man in Siberia. This continued through our earlier years to Harbin, Manchuria, where we had settled in 1915 after leaving Siberia "temporarily" at Grandfather's insistence, to ride out the brewing advent of Bolshevism.

All that changed on that fateful day. Father was lost. It was as though the became shell-shocked. The burden of having to care for a wife and two sons was too much to bear. That is when Mother took over the reins. From that moment on, Mother was the leader and the guiding light of the

family. Father would not do anything without first consulting her.

It was Mother's decision not to go to the United States, our original destination, but instead to return to Harbin after the earthquake. Without my Grandfather's backing Father was on his own for the first time in his life. He had no professional skills, thus he was just another White Russian refugee having to find a way to make a living in a strange country — China.

There was no hope for any further financial help from Siberia as the Bolsheviks had, by this time, already confiscated all of Movshev's enterprises. Luckily, due to Grandfather's standing among the Jewish communities of Siberia, and because he was also well-known to the merchants of Harbin, Father was able to obtain credit to establish a haberdashery in Tientsin, China in 1924.

Running a small haberdashery when there were wealthier better established and bigger competitors was extremely difficult. The limited financial returns created problems with meeting deadlines for paying outstanding obligations. This was more than Father could cope with and he never regained his equilibrium. His self-assurance, formerly his best quality, was completely lost and he began questioning his abilities.

Writing poetry became his solace. He wrote feverishly, in Russian, a language in which he was well accomplished. I have volumes of Father's poem's. They encompass a variety of subjects. Many of the poems are dedicated to Mother, expressing his undying love for her. The quality of Father's poetry can be compared to the works of a professional. His poems have a deep meaning, they are expressive, descriptive, they touch the heart and leave a lasting impression. They are warm, compassionate, poignant; some are bitter-sweet, many are sentimental. Those written to his Grandson Ron, my brother Bob's son, when he was a little tot are merry, humorous and all thoroughly enjoy-

able, many are fables similar to Aesop's.

The store never did well and the time came when Father had to give it up and pull out what little capital was left. From then on, he had to find other ways to make a living. After being a fur broker, he eventually went to work for others and took the position of managing a small haberdashery in Shanghai where our family lived in the 40's.

Ultimately, he and Mother, together with Bob's family, moved to the United States in 1949. After a short stay in San Francisco, they lived in Chicago for a few years before moving back to San Francisco. While in Chicago, Father had a small job with one of the department stores. Upon retirement, he spent his time in taking care of Mother, writing poetry and doing most of the chores at home.

Here was a man who had never uttered an angry word either to my Mother or to my brother Bob and to myself. He did not have a single enemy in the world, never committed an act that could be called offensive.

An unassuming, gentle man like his father Movshev — his sterling qualities were unfortunately not recognized by us during his lifetime. He succumbed to cancer in San Francisco in 1971 at the age of 85.

## FAREWELL!

Translation of Michael Levaco's Death-bed Farewell Poem (Original in Russian — Written in 1971)

The organist is playing a mournful refrain  
Foretelling that I shall not see you again.  
Life has now ceased to be a lure  
I've travelled far this end to endure.  
Two years of illness has been my fate  
There's no improvement from then to again.

Slow but sure is my descent  
Into an abyss at the Journey's end.  
All this is not a pleasant situation  
With "Farewell" now my destination.  
(Continued on page 17)

## TO IRA AND ISIA MAGID

A new grave now stands in the Melbourne Jewish Cemetery. The Australian soil gathered to its midst Ralph Magid, 43 years old, who so tragically lost his life on December 14, 1992 in Amsterdam.

Ralph left behind him his wife Nicola and two children Benjamin aged 11 and Alexander aged 4.

Ralph was the son of our very dearest friends Ira and Isia Magid. He was a very gentle and good natured young man, had a wonderful sense of

humor and was a great lover of classical music and opera.

His tragic and sudden death came as a dreadful blow to all those who knew him, not only his immediate family but the many friends of the Magid family, the world over.

We, here in Israel, though so far away from Melbourne, too share the grief of Nicola and the children, Ralph's sister and brother and their families and Ira and Isia, our dearest friends, a family we have always loved and admired and we convey to them all our deepest sympathy.

The Magid family is not only well known to the Far Eastern community Isia is a man we are all proud of. He is not only one of the leaders of the Jewish Community of Melbourne and an active member of the World Zionist Federation but also a most successful businessman and philanthropist renowned

in Australia and Israel. The honorary awards bestowed on Isia are a proof of his outstanding contribution to humanity.

It is very difficult, practically impossible, to find appropriate words to comfort bereaved parents who have lost a beloved son. This is a wound that in time will be less painful but it will never heal. It is terribly sad for children to lose a parent but even more sad for parents to lose their child.

May you, Ira and Isia, find just a drop of comfort in your cupful of sorrow by continuing to watch over your children and grandchildren and the enormous job you have been doing for humanity.

We send you, dear friends, our sincerest condolences, these are not just words but feelings from the depth of our hearts. We are here — far away from you, but in these days and hours of your grief we are together with you.

T. Kaufman

## A Letter to Noemi Sinclair-Kharbine

Dear Noemi,

I am impressed and full of admiration for your various talents. Your "Manchurian Cradle" is a fascinating saga, tribute to your uncle Simon Soskin, and is of great interest to those who in a way were connected with Harbin, China.

I followed the English translations of the book in our Bulletin, because I too was born and raised in Harbin. Subsequently, I came to the United States and reside in New York since 1940. And of course, many changes have taken place in my long life.

But besides the above-mentioned details, I wanted to tell you about my niece, Nadia, here. Daughter of my cousin, Raya Podorisky, now deceased, but formerly also from Harbin. My parents and the Podoriskys were related to the Skidelskys mentioned in your book, came to Harbin way back from Poland and worked for them. Nadia was born in Strassburg, France and was brought to New York in the forties by her mother. Naturally, her mother-tongue is French. She was always curious to know of our background — and what was China like.

Manchurian Cradle" and she was happy to get it in the Alliance Francaise in New York. I am delighted to tell you that later we even discovered that your book is gracing the shelves of the New York Public Library (French language department).

Of course, I am impressed the Bulletin of the Igud Yotzei Sin print a wonderful review when you gave you came to visit them in Israel and I know of many readers who followed its chapters for a number of years. Now we will all be awaiting your movie which you plan to make from the book and on location in China.

Good luck!

With all my best wishes,

(Nina Saposnick, nee Koliaditsky)

## FAMILY CELEBRATIONS

On the 24th of December 1992, Mrs. Mania BOORDA and her family celebrated Barmitzva of their grandson and great-grandson Adam ABRAMS at the Western Wall in Jerusalem. Many relatives and friends arrived from all over the world to share Simha with them.



## BOOK REVIEW

# Wartime Shanghai...

THROUGH JEWISH EYES By Dr. MARCIA SACHS LITTELL

**Strangers Always: A Jewish Family in Wartime Shanghai**, by Rena Krasno. Berkeley, Calif.: Pacific View Press, 1992, 218 pages, 20 photos; \$24.95, hardcover.

Most of us view pre-World War II Shanghai as a sophisticated, international scene of luxury and frivolity. We tend to recall the deliciously wicked image so well captured by Marlene Dietrich in the film „Shanghai.“

But few people are aware that a large Jewish population had found refuge in Shanghai prior to World War II, during the very period when it realized its international height of sophisticated living.

Before World War II, Shanghai was China's largest port and a metropolis of more than 4 million inhabitants. More than 100,000 of these residents were foreigners residing in the city's international settlements. The settlements were ruled by 11 countries, including the United States, Britain and Japan, but not by China itself.

The author, Rena Krasno, was born in Shanghai, China, in 1923, the daughter of stateless Russian Jews without passports. Krasno's father arrived in Shanghai in 1921, fleeing Russia.

The earliest Jews in Shanghai had arrived from Russian in 1887. Another group of Russian Jews settled in Harbin in 1896, later trickling down toward Shanghai. Others fled after the Great War of 1914-18, and more came after the Revolution of 1917-18 and civil war of 1918-21. Still other Jews left Harbin for Shanghai in 1928. As anti-Semitism and pogroms grew in the Ukraine, they flooded Shanghai, arriving by rail and sea and on foot. Many trekked by one means or another across thousands of miles to reach the safety of China.

In this book, Krasno provides the reader with a graphic — indeed unique — account of the events that unfolded during the chaotic period of the wars in the Pacific. It is an unusually competent combination of solid history and personal experience. The

accounts from her diary present a unique description of daily life in the Jewish community, especially in the time of the Japanese occupation of Shanghai.

Shanghai became a haven for Jewish refugees from Germany Austria and Poland — as well as Russia — because it was the only place in the world where one could land without a visa or official paper of any kind. After Kristallnacht (Nov. 9-10 1938), the trickle of refugees to East Asia became a flood, reaching its height of 17,000 by the start of the American war with Japan Dec. 7, 1941.

In recent years, there has been an outpouring of books describing the plight of European Jews who were caught in the web of World War II. We have a number of meticulously documented historic accounts, such as Leni Vahil's book, "The Holocaust." Raul Hilberg, Yehuda Bauer and Lucy Davidowicz — to name a few — also have added to the historic documentation of this period. In addition, we are fortunate to have several hundred excellent eyewitness accounts from survivors and partisans in the form of personal stories and diaries. More recently, doctoral dissertations from younger Jewish and Christian scholars also have begun to surface.

What we have lacked in the litera-

ture has been the voice of those Jews who lived in Shanghai both in its heyday, in the years before, as well as the years during World War II. Fortunately, a trickle of firsthand accounts has begun to surface, before all of those survivors are gone, documenting the lives of those who lived through and experienced the Japanese occupation.

The voice of Krasno, who was a young girl just coming of age at the time of the occupation, is a welcome and valuable addition to the literature. We are fortunate to have this engrossing and evocative eyewitness account of her own and her family's experiences. She recorded the information in a personal diary and also collected information from newspapers, wall posters and other publications.

This young woman's moving account of a life assaulted by the stings and humiliations of anti-Semitism is inspiring to read. Her narrative describes the heroic efforts of members of the Jewish community in Shanghai as they helped refugees from the Holocaust.

In addition to the important, little-known history to which his book contributes, those who are proponents of "multiculturalism" will find this chronicle contains an additional lesson. In a world filled with ethnic and political strife, there are presented some important models in tolerance and mutual respect in the most adverse circumstances.

(The Jewish Times)



Nanking Road

# THE HERO OF APRIL

ISABELLE MAYNARD

(Continued from BULLETIN 327)

In bygone years, when he had strolled through the park, the two red-roofed pagodas had gleamed in the sunset, blinding his vision. The Russian nannies and Chinese amahs had guarded their young European charges, cautioning them to stay clean and out of the sandboxes. Now the place was deserted, its flower beds filled with weeds and paint starting to peel on the pagoda roofs.

The Consulate office on the second floor—the only one doing business in that building—had high ceilings, huge bay windows and dark brown mahogany desks. My father had worked for Mr. George, the Swiss consul, for fifteen years, but they still addressed each other as "Mr. George" and "Mr. Zimmerman," and knew little about each other's private lives.

Mr. George and his assistant, Miss Sorenson, were already there when my father came in. Both were tall, angular and spare, and always dressed in dark colors. It was quiet there; the phone seldom rang.

Mr. George had been awaiting instructions to close the consulate. Meanwhile, it was to be business as usual, and the remaining office staff was expected to look busy. For the previous two weeks, the mood in the office had been dark and oppressive. The tea water was brackish. Miss Sorenson's typing contained many mistakes. Mr. George occasionally seemed restless, a strange condition for his usually well-defined, angular, controlled body.

Wang, the office boy, brought in the morning tea, apologizing for the water. Mr. George looked past him as if not hearing the apology and walked into his private office, closing the door. Through the frosted glass, my father could see him slowly pacing. Miss Sorenson kept typing and throwing the papers into the wastebasket. My father filed and refiled dossiers on people long gone; it gave him something to do. The flutter of the twisted papers plopping into the wastebasket, Miss Sorenson's occasional sigh and Mr. George's soft pacing be-

hind the door were the only sounds.

The offices next door were empty. Highland Brothers Casing Company and Weingarten Novelties, formerly flourishing companies, had closed months before. Their neatly stacked crates lined the hallway, Weingarten's marked "FRAGILE" on all four sides and addressed to Melbourne, Australia, and the long brown Highland Brothers boxes destined for Pasadena, California, Unstamped, unclaimed lying in the hallway for months.

At twelve o'clock, my father went to lunch. Outside, Tsui, our rickshaw boy, waited as usual to take him home. The lunch hour was always from twelve to one. While there was no reason to maintain the strict schedule, Mr. George insisted on keeping established routines. He believed that if routines went on, so would civilized life.

Though Tsui was no longer "our" rickshaw boy, as in the old days when he took me to and from school and my mother to the club—and though he could and did take other fares — he always came to the consulate promptly at noon. Tsui and my father had known each other for years, and now both seemed to cling to their relationship as the world they had known crumbled around them. My father knew little of Tsui's private life, other than that he had a wife and two children. We had seldom seen the family, despite their living in our basement, except at Christmas when they all appeared to get their annual gifts. But Tsui, through his kitchen connections, must have known a lot about us. I don't remember ever having had a conversation with him other than to tell him where to take me.

After my father stepped into the rickshaw, Tsui picked up the handles in his apartment on Rue St. Louis. Into my father's consciousness floated

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The European part of Tientsin (in the 1930's)





(Continued from page 19)

thoughts of his possible exile in China and his aloneness there. Was it possible he would remain forever in this still alien land, where he had come not by choice but as a result of historical circumstances? My father could hear Tsui's regular panting and wheezing, carrying him, as he had done for years, in the rickshaw carriage.

When they stopped in front of the house, my father, tears streaming down his cheeks, stepped out and told Tsui that he was his only friend in China. What must Tsui have thought! He had worked for us for years, living silently with his family in our dank, dark basement—for which, I was always told, he was "grateful," because most other employers did not provide housing. He had transported all of us in his rickshaw through summer fu-tiens (intense heat waves) with sweat pouring down his back and a wet towel wrapped ineffectively around his neck, and in the winter drifts when I sat in the quilted tent behind him while he sloshed through the slippery snows. Tsui, the illiterate, wily peasant, now about to be liberated by his fellow countrymen, grasped my father's hand, stifled a sob and furiously blew his nose.

My father had some tea and bread for lunch; there was little else and he was not hungry. The old man was napping on the couch, coughing and wheezing as always. Later, he would die of tuberculosis. No one else was at home. My father wanted a second cup of tea, but they were running short of water. He felt depressed, and returned to the office before one o'clock, feeling more comfortable there than at home.

The slow afternoon began to unfold. A few pieces of mail had been brought in by Wang, but there was none for my father. Mr. George had nothing in his mail concerning my father. He had been trying for months to expedite my father's planned move to America under the auspices of the Swiss Embassy and the International Red Cross, but neither these efforts nor personal contacts with the new bureaucrats had produced any results. The old comfortable, well-oiled chan-

nels of communication and favors had broken down. In the years when Mr. George was well known in the international and Chinese communities, businesses were smoothly and ritually conducted. How now to communicate with harsh, disinterested and illiterate bureaucrats who didn't even know him? The afternoon sun came in faintly through the dirtstreaked windows. Everyone drank the brackish tea, and nobody knew where Wang was getting the water.

At 2:34 in the afternoon my father's quiet world was shaken by an enormous explosion. He knew, or thought he knew, it was a bomb, but couldn't tell where it had landed. Mr. George, Miss Sorenson and my father rushed to the windows. There was absolutely no activity outside; a hush seemed to have fallen on the streets. It was as if the city were holding its breath waiting for the next bang. No further explosions came. Mr. George and my father assumed the Chinese Communists had thrown the bomb into the Russian Concession far from the consulate—a false but comforting assumption. (The Russian Concession, across the Hei-Ho Canal, had a huge park filled with giant sycamore trees. We used to go there in a small boat that look off on an irregular schedule from a small quay on Victoria Road. There, during the summer, while waiting for the boat, we would buy cardboard containers filled with prostokvasha, a delicious, creamy yogurtlike food, the taste of which I can still conjure up on my tongue.)

They waited, but there were no further loud noises. Mr. George decided to dismiss my father and Miss Sorenson for the day, and asked him to escort her to her home where she lived with her widowed mother. My father and Miss Sorenson walked silently along the silent streets, and parted quickly in front of her flat. He was never to see her again.

That evening the household sat down to a meager meal. Talk was mainly about if and when my father would leave Tientsin to be reunited with my mother and myself. With the explosion of the bomb, it was clear that Communist forces were only days or hours away. Aunt Mary was cheerful and comforting; she was sure

things would work out in the end. The old man was quiet, jealous of my father's plans, but not having the heart to squelch hope. My uncle was preoccupied with a deal he might be able to make the next day. Tsui carefully measured out a cup of water from the bathtub for the dishes, and unobtrusively washed them. Later, he went into the courtyard, where he squatted on the curb, chain-smoking and talking to the other "boys."

Everyone went to bed early. They were saving candles and the household was exhausted by the day's events. The old man coughed all night and my father could not sleep. He got up with the sun. There was no one in the courtyard. The servants who usually gathered there before their employers awoke were not yet out. He felt as if the city were truly deserted.

There had been no further blasts, but everything and everyone seemed to be waiting. A huge weeping willow tree stood in the middle of the courtyard; the bed of flowers surrounding it was dry. The strange, dissonant sounds of a Chinese violin could be heard in the distance.

(To be continued)

## AN EXPRESSION OF THANKS

As most of our readers know I have been hospitalized since November 92. Since then practically hundreds of letters have come from Shanghailanders from all over the world wishing me speedy recovery.

I take this opportunity to thank all my friends for their kind and hope inspiring words and I want them to know that I am making every effort to get better so that I can once again give them Shanghai and Hongkew news, items and articles.

I also wish to express my appreciation to the many China friends including Teddy Kaufman, President of Igud Yotzei Sin and his wife Rasha and Boris Mirkin, editor of the "Bulletin" who visit me almost every day.

Here is a perfect way to show the meaning of the proverb "A friend in need is a friend indeed".

Once again, THANK YOU ALL

SHALOM LEKULAM

KURT MAIMAN

# CHUSAN ROAD WATER EDITOR'S CHAT

The feast of freedom is upon us — spring is in the air and around us. Now the big housecleaning is over and preparations for the great night of Seder, which culminates in the telling of our exodus from Egypt, are ready.

By divine word we are bidden to tell our children and our children's children of this great event, which has been a turning point in the history of the Jewish people.

Whether secular or orthodox, this feast has a special fascination for young and old. It causes hearts as well as minds to open and search souls and memories.

We, our generation have also experienced an exodus similar to our forefathers. We have been saved and

brought to the promised land. But alas, until now we have not done much to preserve, memories of our diaspora in Shanghai and our exodus into freedom.

Our small community from Hongkew is about to vanish and the new young generation know almost nothing about our special history and our life over there. Slowly we are fading away into the dense fogs of the past.

Again we call upon all of you former hongkew-landers, to join us, the small nucleus in Israel, to participate and contribute to our efforts of documentation which will serve historical proof in the chapter of the history of 20,000 Jews from Europe who survived the holocaust and the war in Shanghai-Hongkew.

F. Gottfried

## Fair Treatment of Jews in Occupied Shanghai

An article under above title was written by Dr. Jacob Wilczek of Haifa and formerly from Hongkew—Shanghai. This controversial and thought-provoking article was published some months ago in the Jerusalem Post, and has drawn various reactions.

But now Ernest Heppner's response must be considered a valuable contribution to our efforts of documentation. Another step forward towards the recording of the history of our community in Hongkew has been made.

Hopefully an increased flow of "factual information" (Mr. Heppner's words) will be encouraged by Mr. Heppner's example.

THE EDITOR

## A Response by Ernest G. Heppner

In the last issue of the BULLETIN of IGUD YOTZEI SIN, Kurt Maimann pleads that the history of the Shanghai Jewish community shall not be permitted to fade away without a trace. Amen! However, whenever we speak or write about it, it behooves us to exercise extreme caution not to let our imagination get the better of ourselves.

Unfortunately, during the past years an abundance of articles and books

have been published purporting to accurately describe life in the Jewish refugee community of Shanghai.

It can be argued that fiction based on history has value; it perhaps creates and maintains interest in Shanghai's Jewish community to a greater extent that a mere history could. If, however, the material is presented in a periodical such as the BULLETIN, written by and for survivors of that period, the casual reader would not

question the accuracy of its content. Would a historian researching material in the next century, after all survivors of the Shanghai episode are gone, harbor any suspicion that some of it might be hearsay or a figment of imagination?

The following cases should illustrate the problem: The first is a German language book **Shanghai Passage-Flucht und Exil einer Wienerin** written in 1987 by Franziska Tausig, an Austrian survivor of the Shanghai ghetto. It was critically reviewed by Horst Eisfelder, a most accurate witness and chronicler of that time. How could future historians evaluate it without the benefit of Eisfelder's critique?

The second is an article by Jacob Wilczek in the BULLETIN of Nov/Dec 1922, **Fair Treatment of Jews in Occupied Shanghai**. One would expect it to have presented new material in a factual manner. Unfortunately, this article is riddled with inaccuracies and does not contain any material which has not been discussed previously. Permit me to summarize:

1.) Hongkew was not under Chinese sovereignty. Until 1937, before occupation by Japanese military forces, it was a section of the International Settlement.

2.) A grave miscarriage of justice is being perpetuated by crediting Sempo Sugihara, who issued transit visas, and ignoring Jan Swartendyk, the Dutch Consul who issued the phony end visas to Curaçao. According to documents in my collection about 1,400, not 3,000 visas were issued by those two humanitarians, and, by using passports more than once, approximately 2,178 Jewish refugees arrived in Kobe.

3.) The statements in the fourth paragraph, second column and the second paragraph, fourth column are inaccurate. To correct them in detail would be beyond the scope of these lines. While there were many Russian individuals who helped the earliest refugees who arrived in 1938, the primary financial responsibility of feeding the refugees fell to the JDC. As a matter of fact, during the war, when cables from the JDC in the United States had ceased to arrive, some of the leaders of the resident Jewish community agreed to help feed Polish

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Jews but refused to aid German Jews. Despite guaranteeing the financial strength of the JDC, the representative Laura Margolis, had great difficulties borrowing funds from resident Jews. In January 1942 there were only enough supplies left to either feed 4,000 refugees for one week or 2,000 for two weeks. On January 10, 4,000 Jews were categorically cut from the relief rolls. On January 16, 1942, the *Shanghai Times* ran the full story on the "HUNGRY STARVING REFUGEES IN HONGKEW." Jacob Wilczek writes that food was cheap; but didn't he know that many Jews had already sold all their belongings and no money left to buy any food, no matter how cheap? Has he forgotten about the Emergency Proclamation by the Jüdische Gemeinde, dated January 11, 1942? A report of the International Red Cross, dated June 15, 1943, describes the condition of the Jewish refugees: "...the worst distress exists undoubtedly amongst the German-Jewish immigrants, of whom at least 6,000 are on the point of starvation"... "the local Jewish committee... can raise local contributions to an amount of maximum CRBS 10.00 per capita per month which is next to nothing when you take into account the high cost of foodstuffs at Shanghai, even a Chinese coolie requiring CRBS 150.00 a month to feed himself..."

The level of malnutrition of Heim inmates was sufficiently severe that mass starvation was barely averted at the last minute by the resumption of cabled funds via neutral countries. If the survivors would research this subject as I did for my fully documented book, they would come to the same conclusion: If there is one deserving hero in the whole Shanghai episode it is Laura J. Margolis. There is no doubt that without the professionalism, the dedication, the persistence andchutzpa displayed by Laura Margolis thousands of Jewish refugees would have slowly starved to death.

4.) According to best estimates there were not 7,000 but approximately 4,000 Russian Jews in Shanghai.

5.) Except for barbed wire covered barricades at the main entrance/exit points, the Designated Area was not enclosed by a fence.

6.) The proclamation was not issued in mid-1943 but on February, 18, 1943, and was not only signed by the Japanese Navy but also by the Army. Regarding the "probable motivation" of establishing the ghetto, this speculation was eliminated by the statement of the former German Consul General of Tientsin, Fritz Wiedemann, dated January 12, 1951.

7.) Jacob Wilczek implies that anyone working outside the ghetto got a special pass enabling him/her to leave. Has he not heard of the antics of the psychopathic Ghoya?

8.) Wilczek continues that "...the policemen disliked their assignment at the entrance to the area and often took revenge on the refugees... What difference does it make to a policeman where he stands guard? The fact is that all too often the policemen where anti-Semitic White Russians who used every opportunity to extort money from an unlucky refugee.

Finally, a comment on the title of the article. How many countries, if any, have been concerned about fairness to Jews? The reasons for Japan's behavior towards the Jews were covered in detail some 20 years ago by David Kranzler.

While it is disturbing that organizations such as the "Institute for Historical Review" (IHR) deny the Holocaust for political and personal gain, it should be our concern that future historians will be able to find only factual accounts about the Jewish refugee community of Shanghai.

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Laura L. Margolis, "Report of Activities in Shanghai, China, from December 8, 1941 to September 1943," J.D.C. archives, New York, and Margolis' article in *Survey Graphic*, "Race against Time in Shanghai," March, 1944.

## „BE PREPARED“

(Continued from BULLETIN 327)

19th May 1946 — Excursion to Holt's Wharf; made possible through the kindness of Captain McAdam and Mr. Forsgate who are doing everything to help our Troop.

20th May 1946 — At 7 o'clock we assembled at Kadoorie School where District Commissioner Gordon presented everyone with War Service medals, accompanied by a letter from the District Commissioner.

22nd May 1946 — indoor campfire concert at the Union Church Hall-E. Bergtraun in charge of the programme. All Groups of the Association and many members of the Anglo-U.S. forces attended as guests. A. H. Gordon welcomed back to Shanghai Vice President G. K. Morden and Assistant Commissioner N. S. Jacobs.

26th May 1946 — Excursion to Holt's Wharf, joined by 16th Cub Pack.

29th May 1946 — Flight Lt. R. A. F. Tomlinson held a talk on the R. A. F. Another service Rover Bob West also attended, as well as D. C. Gordon. The two Patrols were disbanded and three new Patrols formed-Horse (Sen. P. L. Ostrower), Hound (P. L. Cohn) and Hawk (P. L. Spitzer). P. L. Domb and Scout Gronowski transferred to the Rovers. Second Spitzer was promoted P/L, E. Culman, G. Lindenstrauss and P. Zacharias acting Seconds.

5th June 1946 — annual inspection by the District Commissioner. Was very satisfied and thanked us for our good work. P. L. Cohn held a talk on aircraft, followed by a lively discussion. Lt. O'Connor also was present.

16th June 1946 — Hike to Millington Camp. On return trip the Troop was invited by A. S. M. Bokler 4th Troop to visit their den at the Community Church.

29th June 1946 — First overnight hike since end of war, at Holt's Wharf. Senior P. L. Ostrower appointed Troop Leader.

10th July 1946 — Lt. O'Connor visited our meeting and informed us that he is going home to be discharged. He addressed us in a short speech in which he praised the good work which we had been doing despite handicaps.

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## The Uprising of the Warsaw Ghetto

In 1943 — 50 years ago — a new chapter of Jewish heroism was written. Written in blood — accompanied by the crashing sounds of explosions, the sharp cracking of rifle fire, the stutter of machine-guns, the cranking of tank chains and from above the drone of Nazi aircraft pouring destruction and fire upon the Ghetto and the Jews within.

After almost 2000 years a repetition of Jewish destiny commenced.

Jewish men, women and children — forced by the German Nazi monster into the narrow confines of a Ghetto — right in the city of Warsaw in Poland — took up arms in a miraculous revival of the ancient heritage from the Rock of Massadah. Imbued by the spirit of the Maccabees and Bar-Kochba. Another generation continuing the fulfilment of the heritage of their forefathers.

A satanic plan devised by the Nazi monsters with the aim of final destruction of the Jewish people was implemented at the Wannsee Conference.

The Germans steeped in their heated beliefs and blind submission to their ideals of racial superiority, proved again their deaf ears and blunted minds to the warnings of history. Their proclamation to the world of the commencement of the 1000-year Reich caused and incogniscence which

we find all through history, when oppressive powers try to subjugate and eliminate Jews.

April 1943 witnessed a harsh clarion call announcing to mankind and the world the invincible spirit of the Jewish people, resisting oppression.

For us in Shanghai, and there were precious few people who were contacted and given the message of the uprising in the Warsaw Ghetto. To this day we are grateful to a few courageous people whose clandestine broadcast brought us this news. It was a shimmer of promise and a gleam of hope.

With the end of the war and the cessation of censored media, the impact of this heroic event brought home the fullest dimensions of this tragic event into our conscience.

With sadness but with great pride and conscious of the scars our nation carries, we honour our fallen fighters. "Faster than eagles and stronger than lions".

WE SHALL NOT FORGET.

Sam (Fritz) GOTTFRIED

The story of the Uprising at the Warsaw Ghetto, was written as a Stage play by Fritz Gottfried in 1948 after completing notes and outlines put down on slips and pages from copy books since the first information



Group of participants presenting the play

reached Shanghai by clandestine Radio stations.

April 1948 saw the staging and presentation of the play performed by a group of members of Betar Hongkew at the Jewish youth Community Center at the Auditorium of the S.J.Y.A. School at the East Yuhang Road premises. The play was also directed by Fritz Gottfried with Fritz Melchior, a Veteran Actor and Director, member of the Jewish refugee community in Hongkew as advisor. The play was received with enthusiasm by the audience and acclaimed by the press. The accompanying photographs were reproduced from the original by the Archive of Holocaust of Kibbutz Lohamei Hagetaot to whom the script of the play has been presented as documentary material.



(Continued from page 22)

A. S. M. Bergtraun thanked him for all his help and advice in the past. Dr. R. P. Koenigstein held a talk about the medical achievements during the war. G. S. M. Mittler returned after 4 months' service with the U. S. Armed Forces in North China.

14th July 1946 — Hike to Blind School. The 4 other sections of our Group and the 5th Troop were also present. Scout Maerischel bade us farewell as he is going to Australia—the first of our Scouts to leave.

27th July 1946 — 9 days summer camp at Holt's Wharf. On 28th parade in front of Captain MacAdams house. A. S. M. Bergtraun thanked him and Mr. Forsgate for their kindness to us; 80 members of our Group (all 5 sections) were lined up. Some 20 Scouts attended the camp. On Saturday there was an impromptu concert which was attended by Adam, Forsgate and Gordon. Politzer held a speech and officially resigned from his post as Scout Master as he would shortly be leaving for Australia. He was thanked for his excellent and devoted work by A. S. M. Bergtraun, given three cheers and a Tiger. The camp was a tremendous success to be remembered by all.

END



# Betar-Shanghai

SHMUEL GOTTFRIED

(Continued)

Today — remembering this period in retrospect, all its aspects seem much more clear than they did at the time when actually the main aspect was hope.

These youngsters then were a source of inspiration to the generation of their elders. In those bleak days of war and ghetto peoples' minds and hearts were often on the verge of desperation. Many were the eyes expressing hopelessness and despair.

Sometimes in 1943 a special news item received through anonymous sources by the way of clandestine radio broadcasts, reported on the uprising in the Ghetto Warsaw in Poland. Jews took up arms in resistance against the Nazi monster — a spark of hope in the utter darkness. Though many were the faint hearts giving way to doubts torturing their tired minds and souls — to us the youngsters of Betar this whispered news caused a dynamic resurgence of hopes and wishes, of praying and believing, expecting the first glimmer of the dawn of freedom. Though we knew that the news media was drastically censored and only announcement of Axis victories were released — many

L. to R.:  
K. Nussbaum  
R. Bidenfeld  
T. Diamant  
W. Zimmermann  
Speaker  
F. Gottfried



Herz'l Memorial Day, 1946

hearts became stout and regained new confidence and hope for a better future.

The public appearance of Betar, groups of singers and speakers, start-

ed to take effect amongst the refugee community. Many came to enquire and to listen — and by the beginning of 1945 the Zionist Revisionists enlisted and registered a growing number of adult sympathisers.

In August 1945, immediately after Hiroshima the Japanese disappeared from Hongkew and the Betar youth proudly raised the blue and white flag on the Hongkew Police Station in Muirhead Road. Activities intensified and by the beginning of 1947 Betar became the recruiting station for Etsel — Irgun Tsvai Leumi.

So again upon looking back on the uprising in the Warsaw Ghetto, the masses of Jewish resistance fighters in all of Eastern Europe, the creation of the Jewish Brigade, have become an historic undeniable proof to the prophecies of Zeev Jabotinsky — the dream and ideology of an independent Jewish State, with its Army of Defence of Israel have become a fact justifying the ideology of Betar from then and today.



The Girls Troop — 1947

F. GOTTFRIED